

THE WEST ARCHITECTS NEWSPAPER 01_01.30.2013

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WEST 8 WINS SF'S FORT MASON MASTER PLAN



FORT MASON CENTER

FIXING THE FORT

Fort Mason Center, a military base-turned-cultural center on the San Francisco Bay, recently announced that West 8, a Rotterdam-based planning and landscape architecture firm, had been selected to design a new

master plan for the 13-acre waterfront site.

West 8's scheme focuses on six key strategies: the Fort's legacy, ecological character, naval heritage, branding, the center's role as the anchor for the complex, and

the upcoming activation of the water's edge.

The scheme includes a proposed new "gateway" building housing the center's administrative offices. The offices, housed within a sinuous, **continued on page 4**

EMERALD CITY PREPS FOR NBA FRANCHISE WITH PROPOSED ARENA



COURTESY 360 ARCHITECTS

SEATTLE KINGS

Seattle still doesn't have a basketball team, but it's betting on acquiring the Sacramento Kings, a move rumored to be imminent. To usher in this acquisition, the Seattle City Council and Metropolitan King County last fall approved a \$490 million basketball and hockey arena. Funding will consist of \$290 million, to come from a private investment group helmed by Christopher

Hansen—the San Francisco-based, Seattle native hedge fund manager—and another \$200 million from public bonds.

Hansen has purchased a total 4.37 acres in the SoDo neighborhood, an industrial area south of downtown Seattle, near the Seattle Mariners' Safeco Field and the Seattle Seahawks' CenturyLink field.

Local firm 360

continued on page 5

Nashville House, 2009



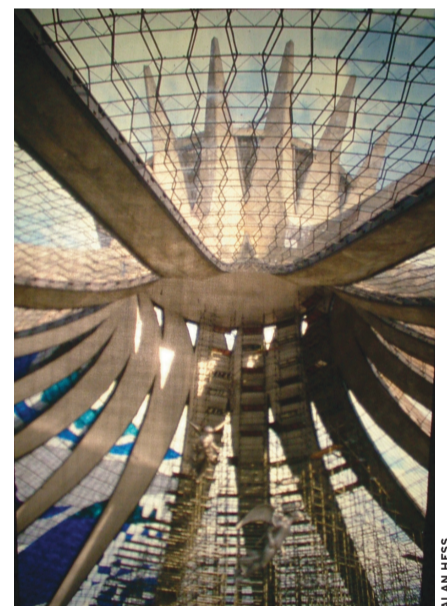
NICOLAS MARQUES

KANNER ARCHITECTS CLOSES; ARCHIVES TO UC SANTA BARBARA

End of an Era

One of LA's iconic firms, Kanner Architects, has officially closed its doors. The company's principal and driving force, Stephen Kanner, passed away in July 2010 at the young age of 57, severely compromising the firm's direction. Last fall, the office closed its doors, and last month, Kanner's widow Cynthia began shipping the firm's archives to the Art, Design & Architecture Museum of the University of California, Santa Barbara.

"He really was the rainmaker," explained Cynthia Kanner, who took over the firm after her **continued on page 8**



ALAN HESS

OSCAR NIEMEYER, 1907–2012

The revolutionary age of Modern architecture slipped further away on December 5, with the passing of Oscar Niemeyer, who was 104. In the beginning, Modernism was about experimentation and possibility: Niemeyer renewed that spirit in 1940 when he (and other Brazilians) pushed the **continued on page 10**

WHO'S ON YOUR TEAM?

AN IS BACK WITH ITS ANNUAL BEST OF ISSUE. FIND OUT WHO WORKED ON SOME OF THE BEST COMPLETED ARCHITECTURE OF 2012: CONTRACTORS, ENGINEERS, CUSTOM FABRICATORS, AND MORE, ALL DRAWN FROM CONVERSATIONS WITH ARCHITECTS. PAGES 11–16

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ANYTHING NY CAN DO, LA CAN DO TOO

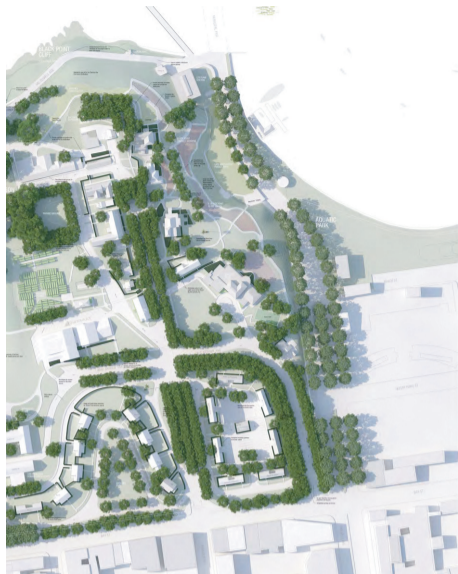
Having lived in New York and Los Angeles for more than six years apiece, I've learned that while they have plenty in common—they're obviously both huge cities with a level of cultural dynamism and diversity that dwarfs most American metropolises—they're also utterly different places.

In the design world perhaps the most important division is this: New York has a number of important, powerful, and effective design champions, among them mayor Michael Bloomberg, planning director Amanda Burden, and transportation commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan. The results have been, by all measures, impressive. The city has transformed itself through design, creating an elite new collection of parks, buildings, and master plans, including the High Line, Brooklyn Bridge Park, dedicated bike lanes, and iconic buildings by most of the world's most celebrated architects, including Frank Gehry, Jean Nouvel, Renzo Piano, BIG, DS+R, and so many more.

Los Angeles is sorely lacking any such unifying galvanizers. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, while a stunningly effective promoter of transit, and leader of a recent triumph (despite heavy lobbying) on the Sixth Street Bridge, is still often subservient by legislative design to warring city council members and various agency heads. The planning director, Michael LoGrande, appears to have a rather tepid vision for long term, proactive planning. And few in the community seem to have taken the lead to fill the created vacuum. Instead of true design champions we have Eli Broad, who builds with little regard for public input or (despite hiring the best) even the input of his architects. Another is Metro, which has been enriched through recent measure R. But despite the valiant work of planning director Martha Welborne, the agency has shown little design savvy in its recent transit projects and transit oriented developments.

So who will step up for Los Angeles? For a long time we thought it would be city planning director Gail Goldberg, but she left after years of losing battles with the developers that really run the city and maintain the status quo. Richard Koshalek seemed a major champion for a while before that, but he skipped town after Art Center gave him the heave for, of all things, being too ambitious.

Now we have the perfect time to find out who's next. LA mayoral candidates Eric Garcetti, Wendy Greuel, Jan Perry, and Kevin James are all vying to lead the city. All have taken part in a stimulating series of architectural forums sponsored by AIA/LA, and all espoused the usual talking points of pedestrian friendliness, design excellence, affordable housing, and neighborhood planning. But it still remains to be seen if any will take the proactive architectural stance exhibited by Bloomberg and his colleagues. It's one thing to support the usual steps. It's another to take unusual steps to transform the city. We need a design agenda that is clear and, above all, ambitious. Design needs to be a priority from the top, despite the struggles that might entail. There should be architects and design professionals at all levels of the administration. That includes a deputy mayor for architecture to oversee all city design; a planning department that continues to improve efficiency and actually enact citywide planning; streets that are designed for much more than cars; and a procurement process that doesn't just favor big, well-connected firms. The improvements will be hard fought, but they can, like they have in New York, lift the quality of life. If New York can do it so can Los Angeles. It's that simple. It just takes a few good people who can really sway the debate. **SAM LUBELL**



COURTESY WEST 8

New development will be phased into the existing historic fabric.

FIXING THE FORT continued from front page
semi-submerged structure, will be the only completely new structure in the proposed master plan.

In what may be one of the more contentious proposed changes, the plan envisions transforming the Pier 1 military warehouse building into an "art-oriented" hotel. Similar past proposals for privately operated hotels in the Presidio and Fort Baker have met with considerable public opposition before their eventual openings.

The choice of West 8 culminated a design selection process that began with 20 invited firms, which were then narrowed to three, who prepared conceptual plans for the center. The other two finalists were teams led by Bruner/Cott and AMP Arquitectos.

The Fort Mason Center was created in 1977 from the former military complex of the same name. It is administered by the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, part of the national park system. Overseen by a nonprofit board, the center houses numerous nonprofit cultural and arts organizations and contains several large venue spaces. While the center occupies some of the most desirable waterfront property on the San Francisco Bay, its facilities' lack of a cohesive urban concept and public access have been problematic.

The West 8 team is comprised of nine firms and, incidentally, was the only team of the three finalists that included Bay Area designers and consultants. The design process will proceed as funding is identified; no firm timetable exists.

In addition to West 8, the team consists of San Francisco-based firms Jensen Architects, Bionic Landscape Architects, Architectural Resource Group, and Ila Berman. Other consultants included Moffat & Nichol, HR&A Advisors, Langdon Associates, and Impark.

GEORGE CALYS



LA VOTERS APPROVE TAX TO PAY FOR DOWNTOWN STREETCAR

Red Car Return

A downtown streetcar for Los Angeles, which could begin running as early as 2016, was approved in December by Los Angeles voters opting for a local tax on downtown landowners. The \$125 million project will

run on tracks, just like the streetcars that once dominated the city.

The design of the streetcars has yet to be selected, but the primary route goes south on Broadway from 1st Street to 11th Street, west to Figueroa Street, north to 7th Street, east to Hill Street, and then north again, terminating at 1st Street. LA's transportation agency, Metro, began work on the project in 2011, collaborating with the city's former Community Redevelopment Agency, the city

itself, and ad hoc community group Los Angeles Streetcar, Inc.

Seventy-three percent of downtown voters approved the measure. Now the project needs to get federal approval before officially moving ahead. **VERONICA ALIF**

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MORE AND MORE MOBY

It's obvious that **Moby**, whose L.A. architecture blog has become quite the sensation, has now become the official mainstream spokesperson for the city's design community. First he made the big address starting off the AIA/LA awards in Santa Monica. Now he put together a video to accompany his address for the kickoff of the Getty's Pacific Standard Time Presents: Modern Architecture in L.A. Now we can only guess where he'll pop up next. Meanwhile he becomes the latest in a line of celebs the Getty has tapped to promote its offerings, from Ice Cube to Anthony Kiedis. Move over Starchitects. Here come architecture stars.

BETTER LAX?

It looks like things at long-maligned LAX are looking up. First we reported that **AECOM** is working on a big makeover of the airport's roadway spaces and that **Fentress Architects** is completing a new Tom Bradley Satellite Terminal. Now we've gotten our hands on a secret shortlist for LAX Terminal 4 Connector, the next component of the airport's international spaces. And the finalists are... **Corgan** (with Turner) and **Gensler** (with Hensel Phelps). Now if only they could get the subway to go there LAX might actually become a world-class airport!

SCI-ARC

Our favorite new naming triumph: SCI-Arc's "Hispanic Steps." The new indoor amphitheater, located in the middle of the SCI-Arc building, is used for lectures, performances, symposia, film series, and community meetings. The steps were paid for in part by a recent ArtPlace grant.

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360 ARCHITECTS

SEATTLE KINGS continued from front page Architecture is leading the design and submitted a series of conceptual schemes to the city during design review meetings in November and December. The proposed 725,000-square-foot arena could seat between 18,000 and 20,000 people.

Renderings of the Seattle Arena depict a grand stair leading to a steel and glass entry and concourse. Within

this transparent box, a glowing, opaque orange-gold tapering cylinder contains the court and seating bowl. 360 Architecture envisions the stepped entry along Occidental Avenue South as a "front porch" for the neighborhood. The glass-enclosed concourse provides views of the city skyline and Elliot Bay. Also included are plans for a public promenade, as well as improved pedestrian and bike connections to

public transit on Fourth Avenue South.

Supporters applaud the investment in the city, while critics hope to see a better connection to the Sodo area. The neighborhood is also home to a busy port, and longshore workers are concerned about traffic congestion. Terms of the agreement require an environmental review, which could take up to a year to complete. **ARIEL ROSENSTOCK**



COURTESY POON DESIGN

> MENDOCINO FARMS

175 South Fairfax Avenue,
Los Angeles
Tel: 323-934-4261
Designer: Poon Design

Mendocino Farms, Los Angeles' popular sandwich joint, has quickly become an institution. Since opening a small stand on Grand Avenue downtown a few years back, the restaurant's huge success (and lines) have spawned several more openings around the city.

The company's de facto architects, Poon Design, designed the latest location, at 3rd and Fairfax Avenue along Miracle Mile. Poon has designed three other locations: in downtown LA, Marina Del Rey, and West Hollywood; and work has begun on on yet another location, for downtown. The new restaurant, across the street from the city's heavily visited Farmer's Market, will fuse traditional Americana with a contemporary palette, not to mention a sense of humor. According to the design team, this location is meant to appeal less to the business types downtown and more to the families further west.

"The idea was to make the place comfortable. Like the sandwiches, these things want to appear handmade and crafted," explained Poon design principal John Kim.

The space is lit by chandeliers, each made from 1,600 wood clothespins on wire frames, and a vaudeville sign exhorts diners to "Eat Happy." A tree grows out of the wood and industrial pipe community table. There's even artificial grass covering some of the benches, creating a picnic atmosphere. **SL**

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AFTER YEARS OF DELAY, SF BEGINS CONSTRUCTION OF ONCE-CONTROVERSIAL NORTH BEACH LIBRARY

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

More than two years ago, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors controversially blocked landmark status for Appleton & Wolfard's mid-century North Beach library, in favor of erecting a new facility, to be designed by local firm Leddy Maytum Stacy (LMS). Late last year, the project, which is one of the final pieces of the San Francisco Public Library's Branch Library Improvement Program, finally got the go-ahead. Construction is now under way.

"It's been quite a process," remarked LMS principal Marsha Maytum. "We're happy to finally see shovels in the ground."

LMS's design for the two-story library provides 60 percent more space than the Appleton & Wolfard building did and emphasizes natural lighting through clerestory windows and sawtooth skylights. Large corner windows open up views to surrounding parks, the Transamerica Pyramid, and passing cable cars.

"We want the building to be light and airy, like a pavilion in the park," said Maytum.

The firm also created a master plan for the block, relocating the library to the corner site of a former parking lot and reclaiming its former site as open space. The firm emphasized connecting the library to this surrounding recreational space, which was largely

paid for through a new city bond measure, and moved a children's play area away from a busy street.

The \$105 million Branch Library Improvement Program calls for 16 branches to be renovated, four to be replaced with city-owned buildings, and three branches, including North Beach, to be replaced with new buildings. The program also sponsored the construction of the new Mission Bay branch, the city's first new branch in 40 years.

Earlier acrimony that flared over the project appears to

have fizzled.

"I'm not sure there is much of a controversy left," said HRC president Charles Edwin Chase. "I really haven't heard much about it, frankly...There is certainly the sense that there was a loss in terms of the building itself. But from a community perspective I think the new library will provide the kind of services that are necessary." **SL**

Elevation of new library and context of new library (top); renderings of the interiors (bottom).



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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JANUARY 30, 2013



UCLA'S PAULEY PAVILION RE-OPENS AFTER RENOVATION

Glories Past and Present

When dealing with beloved historic structures a delicate balance is necessary and best achieved by appeasing stalwart loyalists, but also appealing to a younger, less sentimental market.

A good example is UCLA's Pauley Pavilion, which, after a hiatus of almost three years, recently re-emerged from a \$136

million renovation and expansion.

First designed by modernist architect Welton Becket in 1965, the arena has been a landmark on the campus for the last 45 years and home to a staggering 42 NCAA championship teams (in basketball, volleyball, and gymnastics). It's been home court to basketball stars like Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Bill

Walton, and Reggie Miller and it's where the legendary John Wooden coached.

"We wanted to keep what was here, optimize it, and make it function better," said Jonathan Ward, design partner for NBBJ, which oversaw the recent work. That expansion added an additional 65,000 square feet of lobby, concourse, and team space.

The structure's distinctive V-truss roof structure and concrete shell remained intact, but the arena was expanded outward with the creation of a new facade made of steel, clear glass, channel glass (which glows at night), and terra cotta panels.

The facade leans back rather than standing perpendicularly over the street; the effect gives the adjacent busy Bruin Walk, which leads thousands of students from their dorms to their classes every day, more space to breathe.

Interior/exterior views of UCLA'S Pauley Pavilion.



COURTESY NBBJ

The new facade allowed for a concourse that eased visitor flow around the arena, and upgraded and increased amenities like concession stands and restroom areas. NBBJ re-oriented the entrance to the north, adjacent to Bruin Walk, by setting on that north face the 35-foot-high glass-enclosed entrance. To the east is "Wooden Way," a mini-museum of Wooden memorabilia. On the south, glass hangar doors open up, creating an indoor/outdoor concourse space suited for grills and barbecues for tail-gating. Inside, perforated blue metal panels with digital images of UCLA athletes in action hang on the original stadium's concrete exterior and act as a way-finding system.

When the original Pauley was constructed, it was situated at the western edge of the campus. Since then, UCLA has grown around it. To make room for additional amenities,

NBBJ expanded downward, with a new, two-story building underneath the existing Bruin Walk. The underground expansion holds new locker rooms with thick carpets and cherry wood, plus training rooms, a film room, a sports medicine room, and equipment storage areas. A 6,000-square-foot Pavilion Club comes equipped with a full bar and kitchen for donor events or other university gatherings.

NBBJ improved the seating bowl by realigning seating sections, reducing obstructions in circulation and views, and adding approximately 1,000 seats. Theater-style seats now replace the original bench seating. The new basketball court is made of FSC-certified maple wood. The renovated arena also comes with upgraded technical systems, including a new scoreboard, lighting system, and wraparound LED signage. The project is on track for LEED Gold certification.

Overall, the NBBJ team has done a commendable job melding past and present, especially in the eyes of athletes who have played in the old Pauley Pavilion, said Robert Mankin, NBBJ partner-in-charge. "A lot of the feedback was what we had hoped to hear—that they could come in and still recognize the old Pauley. It felt updated, but not so updated that it had erased what it had been before." **CARREN JAO**

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END OF AN ERA continued from front page

husband's death. "We could keep going in his style, but it was his vision and passion that really drove the firm," she said.

Kanner Architects, originally founded by Kanner's grandfather, Herman, in 1946, contributed significantly to Los Angeles' built legacy. The firm made a name for itself with its sleek modernist commercial buildings, and really came into its own with Stephen Kanner's mixture of elegant restraint and compelling whimsy.

Led by its talented senior designers, the firm was able to procure work after Kanner's death, said his widow. But the firm lost what Winston Chappell, Kanner's brother-in-law, who managed the firm after Kanner's death, called its late principal's "matrix of leadership abilities," from marketing to connections, to the sheer will and charisma to push projects through.

The company flirted with a handful of purchase offers from other architecture firms. The most recent, from New York architect Ronette Riley, collapsed this past summer. Many of the firm's designers have taken projects with them to other offices or to their own practices.

"It's a weird asset, an architecture firm," said Chappell, the owner of his own residential architecture practice. "The firm was so linked to Stephen's aesthetic, and his personality."

In the end, Cynthia Kanner said, she preferred to "preserve the legacy rather than having it subsumed into another person's vision."

UCSB's architecture and design Collection, begun by curator and historian David Gebhard in the 1960s, contains many of

Southern California's most esteemed architects' archives. Included are the work and documentation of Charles and Ray Eames, Irving Gill, Bruce Goff, Harwell Hamilton Harris, Edward Killingsworth, Paul Laszlo, Wallace Neff, Rudolph Schindler, and Paul Williams.

"We're so excited," commented UCSB Architecture and Design curator Jocelyn Gibbs about the procurement of Kanner Architects' archives. She pointed not only to the firm's celebrated modernist architecture and to its three generations of leadership, but to the fact that the firm's work extends into the 21st century, a rarity in the collection thus far.

The Kanner archive, Gibbs estimated, includes about eight models, 60 to 80 boxes of documents, more than 200 slat files, and several rolls of drawings and blueprints. It should be available to researchers within about six months.

"You can see a lot of Stephen in the archive," added Gibbs, pointing to the architect's many informal drawings, sketches, and other artworks sprinkled throughout. "He drew everything, and you can really get a feel for his design process and get into his head."

"We wanted the Kanner work to be accessible to students and researchers," added Cynthia Kanner. "That was far more moving to me than making a bit of money on selling the practice."

The part that Chappell says he appreciates most when he steps back and looks at the work is "the element of pure joy of making a building that was so apparent in Stephen's work." **SL**



COURTESY SOM

SALESFORCE.COM MOVING TO
SOM'S 350 MISSION

ON THE MOVE AGAIN

Kilroy Realty has announced that tech giant Salesforce.com will lease 160,000 square feet of space in its proposed SOM-designed 350 Mission tower, located at 1st and Mission in San Francisco's south Financial District. With the signing of this anchor tenant, the developer is set to begin construction on the first new office tower in the city since the onset of the 2008 recession.

The announcement follows Salesforce's decision last February to cancel its colorful Ricardo Legoretta-designed headquarters in Mission Bay. At the time, Salesforce offered scant reason for the cancellation other than stating that a new building would not fit the company's expansion timetable.

Located on a prominent corner diagonally across from the Cesar Pelli-designed Transbay Terminal, which is currently under construction, 350 Mission features 27 stories of office space. The building's ground floor is faced with a fully operable floor-to-ceiling glass wall capable of opening the lobby to the street. In a nod to SOM's 101 Second Street tower, the lobby of 350 is billed as an "interactive" space and will contain stadium step seating and changing digital graphics.

"It's a wonderful match and I am so pleased that they are enthusiastically embracing the building's core concept of a new form of highly porous, urban engagement," noted SOM principal Craig Hartman. "The result will be a landmark in San Francisco."

Kilroy plans to seek LEED Platinum certification of the building and has expressed its intention to construct a fully carbon-neutral facility.

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**OSCAR NIEMEYER, 1907-2012**

continued from front page international architectural movement in a controversial new direction.

By 1940, the International Style was already fitting architecture for a narrow straitjacket of rational right angles. Niemeyer up-ended that neat formula, with a series of astonishing and controversial designs that re-established the role of the curve in Modern architecture. With the parabolic vaults of the Church of St. Francis of Assisi and the free-form marquees of an outdoor dance pavilion, at Pampulha, a new suburb of Belo Horizonte, Niemeyer threw form open to nature, landscape, and culture.

What made these buildings shocking was that Niemeyer had been an insider, a prince of the realm. He had learned Modernism when he was still in his twenties, at the feet of Le Corbusier. Working with Corbu and a team of equally talented young Brazilians (Lucio Costa, Roberto Burle Marx, Affonso Eduardo Reidy) on the design of the new Ministry of Education and Health building (1936–1943) in Rio de Janeiro, Niemeyer absorbed the fundamentals of the Swiss master: a mix of scientific rationalism and artistic expression.

Niemeyer took these curvilinear forms even further in a tour de force design for his own 1953 house in Rio de Janeiro. He would not recant the curve, he would not fall in line, and he became an official apostate.

“Your house is very beautiful,” remonstrated Walter Gropius, “but it is not multipliable.”

The European leaders of Modern architecture were horrified that Niemeyer had undermined the scientific rationality in

which they put their own faith.

But Niemeyer was more interested in Modernism for the license it gave him to explore new forms of architecture and life. Visiting him at his Copacabana beach office, I met a true Brasileiro, a true Carioca—native-born to Rio de Janeiro. He was a Modernist who loved pleasure.

Indeed, his office, squeezed between two larger buildings on the wide Copacabana sidewalk and fronting the famous beach, hardly even seemed the focal point of an international architecture office. The wide sidewalks, paved with undulating black and white cobbles, were jammed with beachgoers. And the narrow nine-story building was almost quaintly Moderne, with a top-floor office whose two curving bay windows jutted out to embrace a view of the Atlantic. The oddly surreal shape of Sugarloaf at one end of the panorama, the curving line of the surf, the crowds of sun worshippers—this was the balmy atmosphere that Oscar Niemeyer had breathed his entire life. Of course it would shape the way he saw architecture.

Niemeyer, then in his mid-eighties, was friendly and generous to this architect visiting from the United States (despite the fact that the U.S. in 1964 had refused Niemeyer, because he was a Communist, a visa to supervise his third building in Santa Monica, the Joseph and Anne Strick house). He spoke English, but preferred to have a staff member translate as he told and drew his story, once more, about architecture.

Architecture was clearly his life, but “architecture” included all of life: the pleasure of friends and

conversation, the beauty of women, the rhythms of Samba (he designed the special civic promenade for Rio’s Carnival parade in 1983), the conviction of his politics, and his extended family. He spoke of his love of modern engineering and materials (particularly concrete) to create breathtaking structures that sheltered from the sun and rain, but also had the potential to be natural sculptures. He kept coming back to the point of view of the individual human eye taking in the landscape.

This natural love of living formed the foundation for his architecture and his revolutionary ideas. He was both sensuous and cosmopolitan. Growing up in Rio, he knew that life was not just about rationality; it was about emotion, sensual touch, and beauty. Like the Surrealists and other Modern artists, he used impulse and intuition; there is a dreamlike quality in Niemeyer’s forms. Those dream forms also blend easily with Brazilian nature: the wildly dramatic landscape of Rio de Janeiro’s granite domes; the luxurious meanders of the Amazon seen from a plane; the intense colors and shapes and opulent size of the country’s plants.

These inspirations also blended with Niemeyer’s love of Brazil’s colonial architecture—another aspect of his work that did not sit well with his International Style critics. With his mentor Lucio Costa, Niemeyer actively preserved the eighteenth century towns of Brazil. It is not a far leap from the coils and serpentine licks of those Baroque churches to the free-form curves and whips of Niemeyer’s spiral ramps and wavelike factories.

Apostasy was a natural role for Niemeyer, and it did not ultimately



ANDREAS KORNFELD/ESTO; WAYNE ANDREWS/ESTO

Clockwise: National Congress Complex, Brasília; Cathedral of Brasília; St. Francis of Assisi in Pampulha, Brazil.

marginalize him. He was still designing and building around the world shortly before his death. Like many famous architects, he had a large ego (colleague Roberto Burle Marx called him “a hothouse flower”), but that ego expressed self-confidence, not fragile defensiveness. He would not react to criticism; when he and one-time mentor Le Corbusier were both competing for the United Nations building commission in 1947, Le Corbusier contacted Niemeyer once it was clear that Niemeyer’s entry was going to win. Le Corbusier suggested that they blend their entries. Niemeyer consented.

He was a committed Modernist but one with his own intuitions—there are rich contradictions in this kind of architect. Many of those contradictions played out in his largest commission—indeed, the commission of the century: the design, beginning in 1956, of Brasília, an entire new capital city for Brazil.

In some ways Brasília was itself a self-portrait of the architect as a vision of his nation’s future. The slender Modernist columns of the executive Planalto Palace, barely touching the earth, lift the eye to the future. Their weightless white curves evoke the castlelike clouds floating over the vast and rich Planalto prairie that at the time was the future of Brazil. Niemeyer (who disliked air travel) spent hours driving from Rio to the Brasília site, engrossed in the ethereal shapes of those clouds.

The ministry buildings, on the other hand, are a series of rational glass boxes, lined up like dominoes, one after the other—a vision of communal government power and

bureaucracy. Niemeyer was, after all, a Communist.

Between these two poles, the superblock apartments are, in many ways, a reasonable Modernist manifestation of Corbusier’s Ville Radieuse towers (Paris, 1924), tempered by humanity. They are only seven stories tall, low enough to relate residents to the ground, which is landscaped with parks by Burle Marx.

But Niemeyer’s overconfidence is seen in that which was left out, and which later forced itself into the picture: the helter-skelter satellite cities that housed the thousands of workers who were not so neatly taken into account in the original city plan.

Niemeyer’s Brasília, curves and all, is in many ways the zenith of 20th century Modernism. Yet, then, there was no place for it to go. By the 1960s, international Modernism was confronting a rising tide of questions that undermined the certainties that already had been conceived and fought for, for a half century. From his office overlooking Copacabana Beach, however, Niemeyer continued to build in Brazil, Europe, and Africa, with forms that became even bolder, simpler, more colorful, and more surreal.

Modernism for Niemeyer the Brasileiro was no ascetic hairshirt philosophy. It was the use of modern means to embody the joyful rhythms and leisure of life.

ALAN HESS IS AN ARCHITECT AND WRITER BASED IN CALIFORNIA.

MASTER LIST

Architecture, as the cliché goes, doesn't happen in a vacuum. Even the most masterful of designers relies on a cadre of consultants, contractors, and suppliers for the success of their projects. Each year, *AN* sets its sights on calling out these unsung heroes of the building trade: the engineers, technology specialists, and material sources whose labor and products come together to turn the abstractions of design into concrete reality. The lists that follow were drawn from hours of interviews conducted by *AN*'s editors with the architects of some of 2012's finest finished work.

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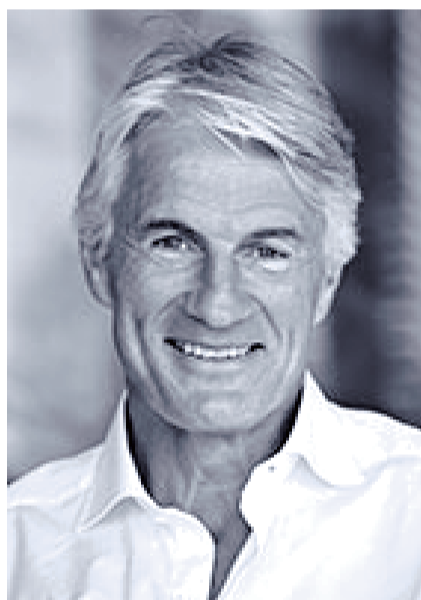
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JANUARY

WEDNESDAY 30
LECTURES**David Ruy: Returning to (Strange) Objects**

7:00 p.m.
SCI-Arc
W.M. Keck Lecture Hall
960 East Third St.
Los Angeles
sciarc.edu

Design in the Age of Design

7:00 p.m.
Pacific Northwest
College of Art
Swigert Commons
1241 NW Johnson St.
Portland, OR
cal.pnca.edu

THURSDAY 31
EVENT**Perspectives on Craft + Design: One Object, Two Views—Collectors and Museums**

6:30 p.m.
Museum of Contemporary Craft
The Lab
724 NW Davis St.
Portland, OR
cal.pnca.edu

LECTURE

Alan Sonfist

7:30 p.m.
Hammer Museum
10899 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
hammer.ucla.edu

FEBRUARY

FRIDAY 1
EVENT**Studio One Symposium 2013: Architecture and The Technological Artifact**

6:30 p.m.
UC Berkeley
Wurster Hall
200 University Ave.
Berkeley, CA
arch.ced.berkeley.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING
Organic Updates**David Choong Lee**

5:00 p.m.
111 Minna Gallery
111 Minna St.
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111minnagallery.com

SATURDAY 2

EXHIBITION OPENING

In The Studio: Reflections on Artistic Life

Through May 9
Portland Art Museum
1219 SW Park Ave.
Portland, OR
portlandartmuseum.org

WEDNESDAY 6

EVENT

Music, Dance + Architecture Sonatasia and Acoustic Eiddon at A+D

6:00 p.m.
Architecture and Design Museum
6032 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
aplusd.org

LECTURE

Cities Will Save The Planet: An Evening With Alex Steffen

7:00 p.m.
SPUR Urban Center
654 Mission St.
San Francisco
spur.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

By-product Becomes Product

7:00 p.m.
Intersection for the Arts
925 Mission St.
San Francisco
theintersection.org

THURSDAY 7

EVENT

Leo Villareal on the Bay Lights

7:00 p.m.
SFMOMA
Phyllis Wattis Theater
151 Third St.
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sfmoma.org

EVENT

What Public Design Opportunities Exist for a Small Firm?

6:00 p.m.
AIA San Francisco
130 Sutter St.
Suite 600
San Francisco
aiaaia.org

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FRIDAY 8

FILM

The Naked City: New York Noir and Neorealism

7:30 p.m.
LACMA
5905 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
lacma.org

SUNDAY 10

EXHIBITION OPENING

Slavs and Tatars Friendship of Nations: Polish Shi'ite Showbiz

6:00 p.m.
Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater
631 West Second St.
Los Angeles
redcat.org

SATURDAY 16

LECTURE

Oregon Lecture Series: John Storrs

Architectural Heritage Center
10:00 a.m.
701 SE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR
visitahc.org

TUESDAY 19

LECTURE

Architecture of Affordable Housing and Health Outcomes

12:30 p.m.
SPUR Urban Center
654 Mission St.
San Francisco
spur.org



COURTESY HAMMER MUSEUM

HAMMER PROJECTS:

DARA FRIEDMAN

Hammer Museum
10899 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles
Through April 14

Miami-based artist Dara Friedman is known for her black and white films of dancers dancing through city streets. For her film *Dancer* (2011) she used a 16mm camera to examine urban space and individuals within these spaces, filming improvisational dancers in a variety of styles, from flamenco, to ballet, to belly and break dancing, and more. In her work, Friedman also investigates accepted concepts of performance-based art. Her grainy films sometimes capture the sounds of street traffic, and she sometimes dubs music that is not always in rhythm with the dancers' movements. For her first exhibition in Los Angeles, Friedman has prepared an 8mm film that is a follow-up to *Dancer*.

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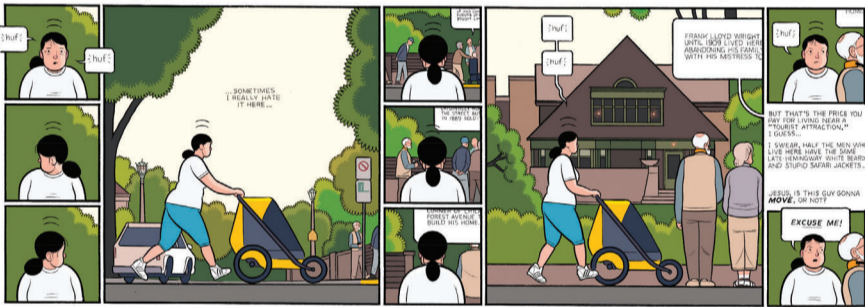
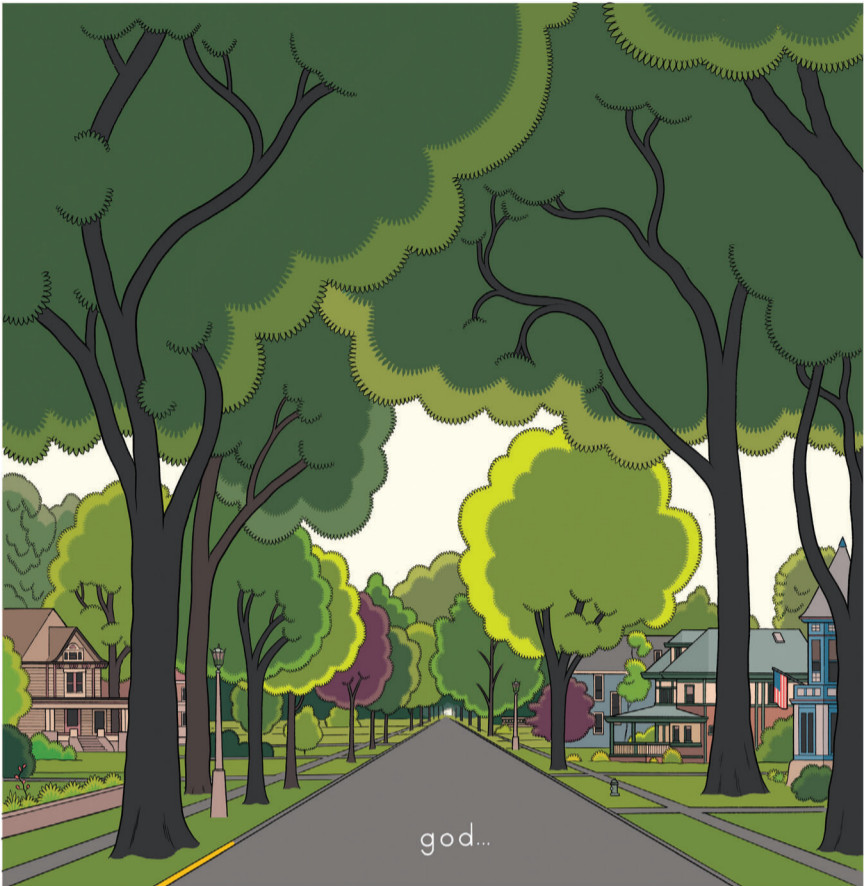
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Chris Ware
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Comics have always shared architecture's lexicon by combining text and drawing: For comics, the goal is to tell a story; for architecture, it's to explain a structure. Both can be wildly fantastic or utterly banal while tracing narratives of the heroic, comic, tragic, and adventurous. Lately, it seems that architects increasingly have used comics to explore concepts or explain ideas, just as artists have used architecture to define a sense of place and set a mood.

Continuing the precedent that Archigram, the 1960s avant-garde architectural group, set during the 1960s, of employing "illustrated essays," recent architectural comics include BIG's best-selling *Yes is More: An Archicomic on Architectural Evolution* and Jimenez Lai's *Citizens of No Place: an Architectural Graphic Novel*. Even Chip Kidd and David Taylor have co-opted the style of golden age comics, producing *Batman: Death by Design*. Archigram, however, eschewed the category "comics" while this generation seems to embrace it.

Add Chris Ware's recently anthologized *Building Stories* to the list of architectural comics. Previously published as the serial *Building* in various periodicals, including the *New Yorker* and Ware's own *Acme*

Novelty Library, the episodes have been collected in an oversized box reminiscent of a board game or box of memorabilia. The 14 volumes contained within come in a wide variety of formats—pamphlet, hardbound book, accordion-fold, tabloid, and a game board-like quadriptych—none of which has a correct or even defined order. Reading them is an act of putting together pieces of the puzzle: Histories are revealed, characters cross paths, and stories develop.

While Ware sets the story with some ambiguity, or at least multiple readings, the main characters are readily apparent. Taking place over 100 years in Chicago, the stories tell of a brownstone and its inhabitants and the changes in the neighborhood as it ages and goes through a series of demographic changes—the tale of many cities. The building's elderly landlady occupies the first floor and rents out the upper levels to a bickering couple, and—the character around which many of the stories focus—a lonely, one-legged florist. There's also an appearance by Bradford the Bee, a foil to the human characters. Each of their stories is weighted with depression, despair, abandon, loss, and melancholy, barely balanced with hope and brief moments of **continued on page 20**

HIGHER ED

The Last Art College: Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1968–1978
By Garry Neill Kennedy
MIT Press 2012

Garry Neill Kennedy's long-awaited *The Last Art College* reveals the visionary infrastructure that placed the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) outside of mainstream European and North American art world influences to become the most relevant program for new visual and conceptual art to emerge in the late 1960s. Similar to Black Mountain College (North Carolina) in its removal from urban centrality and general eccentricity, NSCAD, which Kennedy presided over during the years he describes, was a rural creative enclave, which, through an innovative pedagogical approach, inspired aesthetic investigations that dramatically altered the traditional understanding of the way art could be taught, produced, and even perceived.

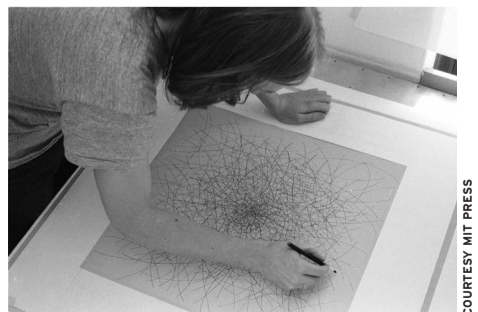
NSCAD's flexible mission, ideologically influenced by Pop Art, Fluxus, Dada, Surrealism, Abstract Expressionism, and European Avant-Garde Theater and Dance, was inextricably wed to the social context of this ten-year period. While the college maintained a permanent faculty of active artists and artists-in-residence, the political reality of the Vietnam War; the assassinations of Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert Kennedy; and the shootings at Kent State and race riots in major American cities, were equally influential in the creation of NSCAD's pedagogy during this time. Gary Neill Kennedy's robust chronology of student and faculty work, essays, photographs, exhibition posters, letters, and interviews is at times overwhelming in its day-to-day detail. Yet the book still authenticates the story of the author's ever-evolving search for, and discovery of, a highly conceptualized model for art education. NSCAD, perhaps inadvertently, made history by encouraging the emergence of fresh, myriad-minded, process-driven, Post-minimalist art forms of an unprecedented caliber.

Kennedy, who became president of NSCAD in 1968, had very strong feelings about what should remain central to the renewal of the institution's mandate. In his introduction, he describes the importance of the school's "peripheral geographic location" and suggests a relationship between the school's location and its ability to avoid the "rigid and controlling hierarchies" that characterized more established art institutions. Further to this point, Kennedy writes that he believed the school itself should have no "encompassing plan" to guide the college's development, but that instead it would "capture the process integral to the innovations that were sweeping through the art world." The author goes on in the Introduction to explain the necessity of a student's potential

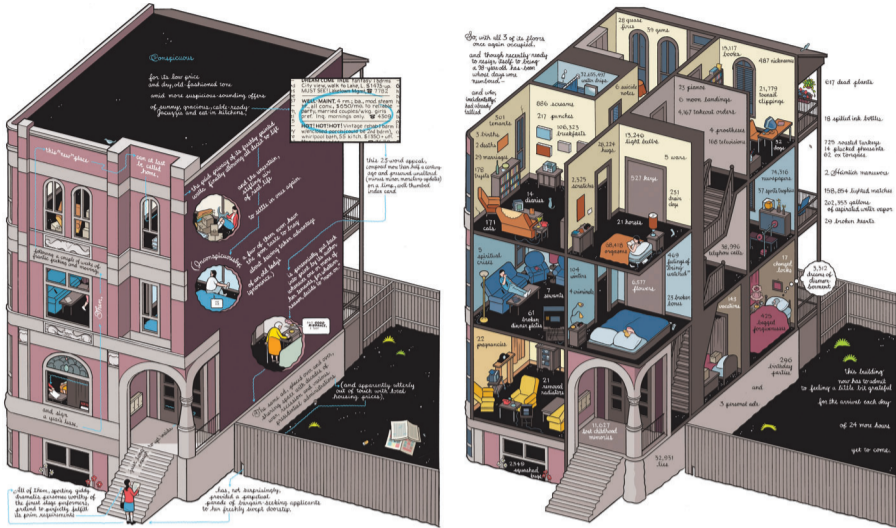
encounter with other artists, and celebrates the school's general commitment to ideas and their rigorous exploration as a generative process for the production of new art in and of itself. It was this interactive relationship between student and active artist, within an environment that favors experimentation over prescribed structure, that formed the core of Kennedy's pedagogical approach and served as the intellectual point of departure for NSCAD in 1968.

This experimental position was empowered by the author's own philosophy. This included Kennedy's then-open acknowledgment of the value of art from the turn-of-the-century work that challenged preconceived notions of content, form, and material and sought to break down traditional modes of expression or representation by asking new questions or exposing the wrong answers. A fundamental capacity for revolution prompted Kennedy's establishment of an atmosphere of "trial and error" in Halifax. Within the constructs of such offerings as the school's Conceptual Projects Class, its Lithography Workshop, the NSCAD Press, NSCAD's exhibition spaces, and a World Encounter Course, Kennedy provided a loose network of laboratories in which those willing to discover new artistic terrain could turn on, tune in, drop out, return, produce, and disseminate works in whatever form they demanded. Many professional artists, such as Sol Lewitt, Dan Graham, Martha Wilson, Vito Acconci, Claus Oldenburger, Carol Condé, and Richard Serra, were involved in the genesis of Kennedy's vision. The proverbial list of renowned artists associated with NSCAD during this period goes on and on.

Although each chapter of *The Last Art College* is more or less similar, in containing a mélange of notes, interviews, essays, published works (by NSCAD Press during that year), lithographs, exhibition announcements, photos, and letters, many things do stand out. Peggy Gail's "Artist's Talk" summaries are particularly insightful, as are Charlotte Townsend's essays on various artists. In terms of the works catalogued, the most striking pieces include but are not limited to: Gene Davis' *Halifax* (1970), David Askevold's *Catapult* (1970), Patrick Kelly's *Lithograph Untitled* (1970), Robert Maclean's *Hoar's Doom* (1970), Joyce Wieland's *O Canada* (1970), Robert Ryman's *Two Stones* (1971), Guido Molinari's *Opposition Triangulaire* (1971), Eric Cameron's *Flame Red* (1974), Agnes Dene's *Map Projections* (1974), Gordon Smith's *Pacific Rim #1* (1975), and various pieces by Vito Acconci and Sol LeWitt. The **continued on page 20**



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CROSS SECTION OF URBAN LIFE continued from page 19 happiness. This is not a child's comic.

Ware's passing observations of the built environment dovetail with another of his projects, to reveal that he is no stranger to architecture. In 2003, he contributed to a special episode of *This American Life* called "Lost Buildings." Ware provided the illustrations and visual pacing of Ira Glass' and Tim Samuelson's discussion of architecture in 1960s and '70s Chicago, specifically targeting Louis Sullivan's demise and Mies van der Rohe's rise. In *Building Stories*, Frank Lloyd Wright's Home and Studio and the Arthur Heurtley House, both in Oak Park, make cameo appearances.

Although it appears prominently, Ware's story is not about architecture. The three-story brownstone quickly becomes a character

in the story, with its thoughts appearing throughout. The back of the quadriptych features axonometric drawings of each floor while the flipside panels depict the building through the four seasons; they are exquisitely laid out and surrounded by the progression of narrative. They also resemble a blueprint, featuring a main drawing, with details and notes filling the remainder of the page via directional arrows, thought bubbles, and arrangements left entirely to the reader. The building's suspicions, observations, and comments appear as cursive notes in the margins. Like a classical choir, the building is the remote observer that reveals hidden stories to the reader.

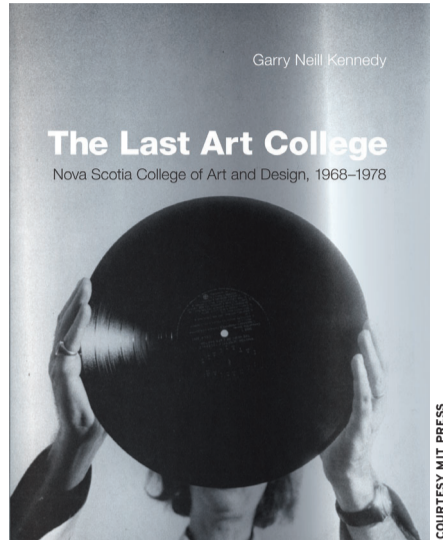
Comics have a lowbrow association but can illustrate ideas for a wide audience. A couple of resources that explore the



image and the word are Scott McCloud's *Understanding Comics*, which gives a thorough overview of comic conventions, and Douglas Wolk's *Reading Comics: How Graphic Novels Work and What They Mean*, which exposes leading figures of the medium and includes a chapter titled "Why Does Chris Ware Hate Fun?"

Whether the title *Building Stories* means creating tales, constructing levels of narrative, or establishing sagas about the house, Ware's latest offering surely contains each, and his graphics, ability to pace the action, portrayal of time, and, more important, attention to detail are unparalleled. Despite the downer tone of the stories, Ware certainly knows how to tell a story, and show it.

JAMES WAY IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO AN.



HIGHER ED continued from page 19 range of interesting material has no bounds.

Kennedy's chronological structure and assembly of elements augment the reading experience, allowing one to participate in the maturation of the program. It seems that student projects became more conceptually refined as time went on. The powerful succession of visual elements from chapter to chapter serves as cumulative evidence of the program's stark authenticity and success. In the end, *The Last Art College: Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1968-1978* becomes Kennedy's greatest work to date as a conceptual artist. He has found a way to make the college's vision and material production stand the test of time.

T.A. HORTON IS A SENIOR DESIGNER AT AVROKO AND A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO AN.

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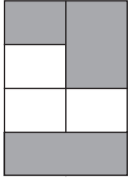
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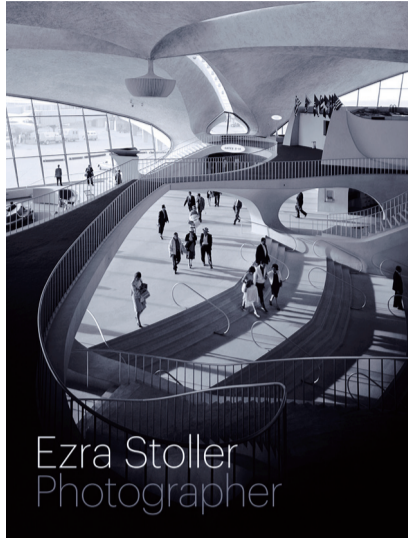
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PETER ZELLNER ESPOUSES THE VALUE OF FINE-GRAIN DEVELOPMENT FOR LOS ANGELES

Mural in LA's Arts District (left); Broadway as it once was (right).

THINK SMALL

Los Angeles sits at a fork in the road: a proverbial decision point that will determine whether it will replay the cycle of development, decline, and redevelopment that characterized it at the close of the 20th century, or evolve into a more cultivated, connected, and egalitarian version of itself.

The city is poised to move beyond its misrepresentations and embrace its recent achievements. For many Angelenos, the day-to-day experience of life is far removed from anyone's memories of life in LA in the late '80s and mid-'90s. There is less smog; and it's easier than ever to find a sophisticated meal and see a great play or attend a world-class opera.

And yet it feels as if something is missing. Los Angeles remains a city subject to the diurnal rhythms of its traffic patterns. LA, especially downtown LA, remains disconnected, and its overarching and under-addressed ethos of urban disengagement has yet to be adequately challenged.

LA has recently been visited by big buildings by star architects, various proposals for megamalls and mixed-use projects like L.A. Live and, perhaps, the Grand Avenue Development. It's still proposing mega-stadiums, giant parks, and plans for big river and transit renewal programs. For this city, the abiding urban-redevelopment logic seems to be that if you build it big and make it iconic, then the private funds and presumably the public incentives will find their way to the table.

While it would be churlish to deny the value of ambitious public buildings in the urban context, LA's *grands projets* (*proyectos grandes?*) only worked well... in the last economy.

And therein lies the rub. As long as our cities, like our states, and to a degree the nation, remain mired in the current

economic doldrums, our large-scale urban redevelopment plans for old but demographically expanding cities like Los Angeles seem like ineffective and outmoded models.

The mega-project approach to remaking the city is capital- and labor-intensive, while generating too few long-term job gains regionally. It's high risk, single shot, and ultimately touristic and brand driven. Indeed, the predominant, disconnected mega-project approach is hard to build, hard to finance, and likely to produce monolithic environments. And although we cannot refute the value of large-scale civic works, cities must develop organically, through incremental means but with raised expectations. Anything else is unsustainable.

There is another model of redevelopment that is native to LA and the region. It suggests both a better ethos for remaking the city center, and a path forward for the reconnection and reconstruction of LA's more dispersed neighborhoods. It takes advantage of the facts on the ground, not in a report, and it is organic and intuitive. And it's likely to work.

Several successful examples of such an approach are already at work in LA: the Downtown Los Angeles Arts District, Culver City's Arts District and Hayden Tract (much of it by architect and SCI-Arc director Eric Owen Moss) as well as other, more boutique commercial strip transformations (the Sunset Triangle in Los Feliz/Silverlake and Venice's Abbot Kinney Boulevard).

There is the notable work Michael Maltzan has completed for the Skid Row Housing Trust and Inner City Arts, an after-school program. Finally, there has been much to praise in the city's successful small-lot subdivision ordinance, which has given teeth (and a protocol) to LA's pressing need to move toward higher

density on a manageable scale.

In an era of tightened financial opportunities, city governments need to stop relying on redevelopment plans that will inevitably fail. Sites for mired mega-projects, if they are to be developed at all and not sit stalled in financing agreements, should be parceled up and handed out competitively to smaller teams of architects and developers. Incentives should be provided to these teams, to lower risk but demand greater responsibility and higher design values. Multiple players on multiple sites means shared risk and diminished scale, but also a realistic agenda for where we are now.

Will this approach lead to the micro-Balkanization of the city? Perhaps it will. Is this approach Pollyanna-ish? Hardly: it has worked elsewhere. Beijing's smarter big-block redevelopments, Mexico City's sophisticated Condesa District, Melbourne's CBD, and Barcelona's extensive work for its (1992) Olympics facilities are all good examples of locales that have marshaled the political courage and financial means to try to grow intelligently.

A clear distinction to the top-down approach promulgated during the boom years in LA should be made: the current approach should be *cumulative, collective, and bottom up*. Redevelopment in LA on the micro scale should be *experimental, innovative, and attuned to community involvement and outreach*. While it's important to acknowledge that demographic pressures to add density to Los Angeles will require a continued commitment to large-scale transit improvements, and these transit projects may in turn spur or require the occasional mega-project, these projects will be *connected* and not isolated.

Imagine start-ups on an urban scale. Imagine temporary environments.

Imagine strategies for incremental, not monumental, change. Imagine the next Los Angeles as an urban stage formed of multiple, tangentially-related set pieces, each uniquely shaped by inimitable means, yet still involved in a dialogue with other urban characters. This approach will re-introduce a nuanced grain to the city, as opposed to its foundational and tract-oriented logic of uninspired repetition and customization. This approach to civic design envisions well-managed but radical shifts in scale across the city. It marks the end of over-manicured districts and a challenge to the Byzantine rules that have built this city alongside capriciously arbitrary administrative fiat, and the quest for short-term financial gain.

This approach imagines a process for the rebuilding of LA along the lines of the city's best virtues: its informality, an enviable climate, and its convivial arrangements of social and private spaces. This approach imagines LA as a city of plurals, as a city of many Davids, not just Goliaths.

To build it and move it forward will take a communal effort led by unique voices. There are two, indeed more than two, future city models for Los Angeles, and we must pick one. On the one hand there is the LA of the big and spectacular (the rest remains ordinary). On the other hand is the LA of new forms of collectivity, new aggregations of social and cultural variety, and experimental architectural innovation. The choice is ours to make.

PETER ZELLNER ESTABLISHED HIS VENICE-BASED, AWARD-WINNING FIRM ZELLNERPLUS IN 2004. ZELLNER IS A FACULTY MEMBER AT THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTURE, WHERE HE COORDINATES THE FUTURE INITIATIVES URBAN DESIGN PROGRAM.

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